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Wisconsin Homeland Security Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2008

Winter weather tests emergency preparedness and response

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Role for businesses in disasters

From summer-time floods to unprecedented levels of snowfall and tornadoes this winter, Wisconsin has been taking a battering from Mother Nature. Emergency responders, municipal workers and volunteers have logged many long hours and night shifts plowing streets and responding to weather-related accidents.

The spring tornado season is right around the corner, and while we all anxiously await the end to a cold and difficult winter, we must remain ready for the challenges that our state is likely to face. As Governor, I am confident that our emergency responders, public works employees and the National Guard will continue their tradition of skill and professionalism in responding to emergencies. As citizens, we must also prepare ourselves by conducting our own emergency planning, acquiring an emergency kit and helping our friends and neighbors in need.

On behalf of all Wisconsin citizens, I



Governor Doyle toured the Wheatland area following a rare tornado in January.

commend and thank all our dedicated public servants who have worked long hours to keep us safe during this difficult winter season. With spring and its turbulent weather right around the corner, we must all rededicate ourselves to emergency preparedness and readiness for the emergencies that may affect our families and communities. ■

Governor Jim Doyle



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From the Chair

Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar



Donald P. Dunbar

Brig. Gen. Donald P. Dunbar
Homeland Security Advisor

What a wonderful winter we have enjoyed here in Wisconsin. Record snow fall in Madison and nearing record snow fall in many other parts of the state reflect the challenges we have faced. In the past six months, weather has been a significant challenge for all of us and I have been impressed by our emergency response agencies at the local, tribal, state and federal levels. Through significant events such as the severe flooding last fall, rare January tornadoes in Kenosha County, and numerous winter storms, our emergency agencies have responded quickly and effectively to help those in need.

Recently, during a very severe storm, our communications broke down and the resulting backup along Interstate 39/90 did not reflect our usual level of response. The report "Response to Traffic and Public Safety Issues in February 5-6, 2008 Winter Storm" outlines the event and describes failures from interagency coordination to public communications. The report is available online at <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov>.

Since the report was issued, the state is in the process of developing a winter storm plan and will be exercising that plan this spring. It is important that we address the issues outlined in the report, such as the ability to close the Interstate, communicating with the public and coordinating between various agencies in a timely manner.

We can and will improve our coordination, communication and collaboration between various government, private and volunteer agencies. All of us know that failure to do so would create risk for Wisconsin citizens during emergency responses. Since being named Homeland Security Advisor, I have met with various local, tribal and state emergency responder groups, and this constant theme of communication

and collaboration is shared by all.

As mentioned in the report, we need to be proactive in communicating with the public. Warning systems, whether through press releases and media contacts or by cell phones and electronic notifications, must be looked at and improved. We cannot guarantee public knowledge of an event, but we must ensure that we take every reasonable step to communicate clearly and often to mitigate the risk to the public.

We also need to ensure our citizens are prepared. I am pleased to report that, in partnership with the Wisconsin Citizens Corps Council and the Office of Justice Assistance, Wisconsin Emergency Management will soon have a preparedness coordinator on board to work with local communities in delivering the personal preparedness message across the state. We need to make sure all citizens have emergency plans and emergency kits in place.

I encourage all those in public safety to take time to read the report. We must learn from our mistakes and make changes to improve public safety. We all have a role, responsibility and a commitment to keep our state and our citizens safe. ■

Milwaukee teen rescues family in fire, credits CERT training

Many people have taken emergency response training classes to prepare themselves for unexpected situations, but few have actually had an opportunity to put their training into practice. For Aaron Parent, a Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC) Youth-build/AmeriCorps member, the Community Emergency Response Team Training (CERT) he received earlier this year made the difference between life and death for himself and his housemates.

Aaron lives in a duplex on Milwaukee's South Side. Aaron is good friends with his neighbors that live in the lower level and often spends time with them. On November 6, 2007, a fire suddenly broke out in the kitchen.

Aaron used his emergency training to help bring his neighbors out of the burning home and to safety. The fire department arrived soon after everyone was out of the home and extinguished the blaze.

Aaron shared, "Everything happened so fast. I never thought I'd use the CERT training I went through a few months ago, but the things I learned at the training kicked in....know your surroundings, remain calm, and make sure everyone is accounted for and out of harm's way. Now I really appreciate the importance of the CERT training...it helped me rescue my friend from the fire." ■

Above Right: Aaron took the CERT training in July 2007. His training was invaluable as he used his new skills to help bring his neighbors to safety during a house fire in November 2007. Aaron is in the middle with the white shirt. Photo by Milwaukee County Emergency Management.



CERT Training: A great experience

Members of the U.S. Forest Service participated in the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training earlier this year. The CERT training was held January 29-30 at the Gas Light Building in Milwaukee. While many of the U.S. Forest Service employees have worked many disasters in recent years, including Hurricane Katrina, they found the CERT training a great experience. Photo by Milwaukee County Emergency Management



Explosion exercise tests responders in Neenah

Winnebago County Emergency Management held a full-scale exercise in coordination with the Kimberly-Clark Corporation and the Cities of Neenah and Menasha on November 13, 2007. The exercise took place at Kimberly-Clark's X-Mill in Neenah.

The exercise simulated an explosion that damaged the X-Mill and caused multiple injuries to the workers and guests of the mill. The exercise, which was jointly funded by a Homeland Security grant administered by the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) and the Kimberly-Clark Corporation, brought together voluntary agencies and the public and private sectors to test the plans that guide the management of large-scale, multi-agency disasters.

The responders practiced skills such as victim search and rescue, triage, treatment and transport; on-scene management using the Incident Command System; Emergency Operations Center (EOC) operations; public information; victim reunification with the families; scene security and many more functions critical to the operation. The exercise also provided Neenah Police the opportunity to test their response to a possible terrorist event, since simulated non-English speaking foreign visitors were part of the exercise.

Winnebago County Emergency



Firefighters lead "injured workers" to safety.

Management Director Linda Kollmann stated that, "While we hope that this type of event never occurs here, Winnebago County is proud to be supporting the Cities of Neenah and Menasha and the Kimberly-Clark Corporation along with the other critical private, public and vol-

unteer response partners with important projects that make our community safer." David Bernd from Kimberly-Clark reiterated Kollmann's stance, "Our mill has a great safety record...this is a result of commitment to safety at all levels of our organization." ■

Keeping track of the flu

A new website designed to provide information on the flu was recently unveiled. **Pandemic.wisconsin.gov** was developed by the Wisconsin Division of Public Health, in collaboration with other state agencies to provide information on pandemic influenza, avian influenza, and seasonal influenza for the general public.

Additionally, the website contains various resources for businesses, schools, health care

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What's New in Pan Flu:

- NEW** Community Toolkit: Preparing for an Influenza Pandemic & Public Health Emergencies released by Saint Paul-Ramsey County, Minnesota Department of Public Health
- NEW** Influenza Pandemic Planning Guide for Homeless and Housing Service Providers [PDF] released by Seattle-King County, Washington Public Health
- NEW** HHS releases Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act Progress Report [PDF]
- NEW** A Tale of Two Cities: How St. Louis and Philadelphia dealt with the flu epidemic of 1918
- NEW** Visit The Great Pandemic website from HHS to learn more about the 1918-1919 "Spanish Flu"

The Great Pandemic
THE UNITED STATES IN 1918-1919

For additional Pan Flu News, visit the [Newsroom](#).

Pandemic Severity Index

Characteristics	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5
Case Fatality Rate (percentage)	<0.1	0.1 - <0.5	0.5 - <1.0	1.0 - <2.0	>2.0
Excess Death Rate (per 100,000)	<50	50 - <100	100 - <300	300 - <600	>600
Stress Rate (percentage of the population)	20 - <40	40 - <60	60 - <80	80 - <90	>90
Potential Number of Deaths (based on 2006 U.S. population)	<50,000	50,000 - <100,000	100,000 - <500,000	500,000 - <1,000,000	>1,000,000

facilities and families. Local and regional partners are also encouraged to submit information on

upcoming exercises, meetings, and best practices related to pandemic influenza planning. ■

State Patrol seizes more than 1,000 pounds of marijuana from semi-truck

A Wisconsin State Patrol K-9 unit uncovered more than 1,000 pounds of marijuana concealed in a semi tractor-trailer unit that was stopped for an inspection at the West Salem Safety and Weight Enforcement Facility on I-90 on Nov. 20, 2007. According to the La Crosse Tribune, the amount seized was the most marijuana ever confiscated in western Wisconsin.

The chain of events began when the driver, Marco Corzo, 54, of Palmdale, Calif., was placed out of service for logbook violations. After observing signs of possible drug smuggling, State Patrol inspectors received consent to search the truck from Corzo and the other occupant of the vehicle, Gurmit Singh, 37, also of Palmdale.

A State Patrol K-9 unit then searched the trailer, which



held approximately 15 cardboard boxes and several pallets of tomatoes. The drug-detecting dog alerted on one of the boxes.

Inside the box, officers found two large packages of marijuana. The other boxes were opened, and officers uncovered approximately 1,048 pounds of marijuana.

Wisconsin State Patrol Superintendent David Collins said, "This drug seizure demonstrates the tremendous capability of canine searches as part of a comprehensive highway criminal and terrorist interdiction program. In addition to the devastation it causes in Wisconsin communities, drug smuggling can be a major source of funding for terrorists. Anything we do to disrupt the flow of drugs helps fortify homeland security." ■



Above and Left: State Patrol K-9 Ella along with Sgt. Paul Matl (left) and Inspector Don Peterson seized more than 1,000 pounds of marijuana concealed in a semi tractor-trailer unit, which was stopped for an inspection at the West Salem Safety and Weight Enforcement Facility on I-90 on Nov. 20, 2007.

Importance of school and campus safety reinforced

The 1999 shooting at Columbine High School was a wake-up call to communities, school administrators and parents that schools were not a sanctuary free from violence. That message sadly resonated in Wisconsin seven and half years later when John Klang, principal at Weston High School, was shot and killed attempting to disarm a student gunman. And last year, the tragedy at Virginia Tech highlighted the dangers faced by college and university campuses.

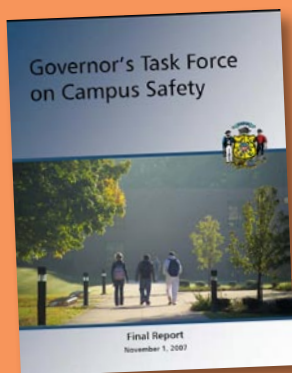
As Attorney General, Governor Doyle produced a report of best practices for schools and law enforcement in the wake of the shootings at Columbine High School. Following Virginia Tech, Gov. Doyle appointed Wisconsin's Task Force on Campus Safety to study the unique aspects of safety on college campuses. The 24-member commission studied the role of students, professors, administrators, mental health providers and law enforcement in protecting the campus community. The Task Force

offered a set of best practices to be used in the prevention, intervention, response and recovery from a shooting or emergency. Importantly, the Task Force concluded that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to campus safety in Wisconsin; however, colleges and universities should invest their attention and resources in prevention and intervention activities, and not solely in technological upgrades. You can view the report on the Office of Justice Assistance website, www.oja.wi.gov/campus_safety.

Emergency planning and response exercises like the one hosted by Beloit College in 2007 are extremely helpful tools to prepare the entire campus community for an emergency. The Office of Justice Assistance currently has funding available for the planning, preparation and execution of campus safety exercises.

For more information on exercise funding, the Beloit College exercise or other college and K-12 school safety resources, visit www.oja.wi.gov. ■

Above and Left: During the 2007 fall semester, hundreds of emergency responders from over 50 Wisconsin and Illinois agencies, converged on the Beloit College campus for a full-scale exercise. The scenario included student actors and required responders to assess and respond to explosions in campus buildings.



State and local partnerships critical to interoperability

A plan to achieve statewide interoperability has been approved by the State Interoperability Executive Council, while discussions with local stakeholders over specific policy, technical and operational aspects of the system continue. The \$15.3 million project will build out a statewide VHF trunking backbone that leverages existing communications infrastructure. An engineering study will be conducted and governance board of local users formed to determine next steps and oversee the progress of the system. The build out of the trunking backbone comes after a 3-year and over \$15 million homeland security investment in local radios and communications interoperability.

Recent weather-related conditions have brought interoperability issues to the forefront of preparedness plans. Summertime floods in southwestern Wisconsin in 2007 showed how a disaster can quickly spread across jurisdictional boundaries and require a multi-agency response. In February, as thousands of motorists were caught in a 12-hour backup on I-90/39 during a snowstorm, National Guard, Department of Natural Resource

wardens, State Patrol officers and Dane and Rock County emergency responders and municipal workers had difficulty communicating. In both cases, the existing state of interoperability proved to be insufficient to the needs of emergency responders and civilians.

The support of local response agencies is critical for an interoperable statewide system to be effective and move forward. The SIEC and Office of Justice Assistance have opened a dialogue with key stakeholders and will continue to take note of this important feedback from local officials as the project progresses.

In the coming weeks and months, an independent engineering study will be conducted to set the foundation for build out of the statewide system. A governance board of local users will also be formed to answer the policy and technical questions that will shape the direction of the system. Given the demonstrated need for communications interoperability, the opportunity offered by the federal funds to develop a truly statewide system is one that Wisconsin communities cannot afford to pass up. ■

Public, private partnerships strengthen preparedness

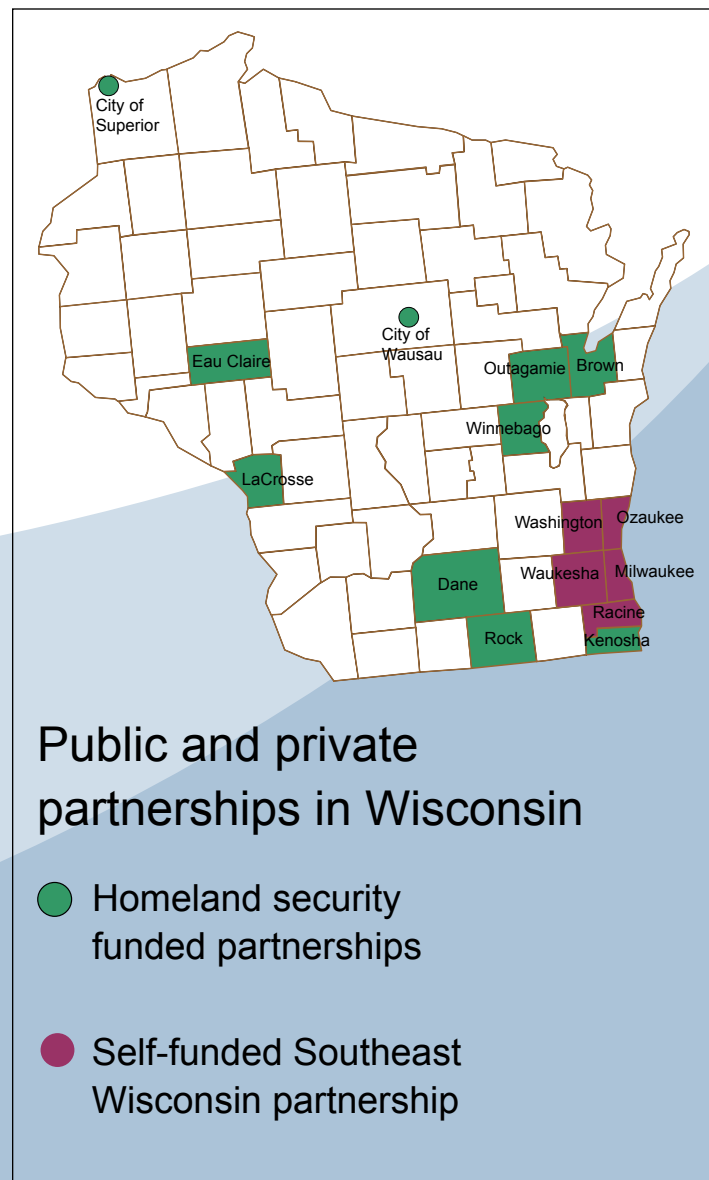
Floods, tornadoes, fires and terror threats are not only worrisome for the safety of individuals and communities; they are also bad for business. A community-wide natural or man caused disaster affects essential utilities such as power and water, restricts an employee's ability to work and endangers companies' infrastructure and products. In an effort to improve community resiliency and response to emergencies, numerous private corporations around Wisconsin are participating in groundbreaking partnerships with local governments and emergency response agencies.

In Eau Claire, the Businesses for a Disaster-Resilient Community Program held a kick-off meeting in early March to coordinate efforts between the county and a wide-array of private corporations, from Xcel Energy to Royal Credit Union, Indianhead Food Distributor and the Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, among others. Together, this public-private partnership will strengthen preparedness by conducting mutual emergency planning and identifying privately-held resources that can be used during an emergency.

The Eau Claire program and nine other counties received seed money from the Office of Justice Assistance to initiate these partnerships. The initiative stemmed from statewide planning meetings that resulted in the project's inclusion in the state's annual homeland security grant application.

"Following state and national disasters and emergencies, private corporations are some of the most generous organizations in donating supplies, resources and many other forms of assistance," said OJA Exec. Director David Steingraber. "We are extremely pleased with the desire of our private sector partners to join traditional public safety agencies in Wisconsin to help prepare for and potentially prevent disasters."

To find out more about current public-private partnerships or how to establish one in your own community, please contact Dave Duecker at david.duecker@wisconsin.gov. ■





Little Firefighter

This fire gear might be a little too big for this little tyke but just you wait for a few years! Racine County Emergency Management sponsored a Super Saturday Safety Fair held at Burlington High School on Saturday, November 10, 2007. The Safety Fair included both indoor and outdoor displays, along with demonstrations throughout the day. Popular activities included the fire safety house, fire extinguisher training, infant car seat checks, mini-fire truck rides and a hazardous materials demonstration. Flight for Life also made a special appearance, landing one of their helicopters in the school parking lot. Photo by Kim Twardosz

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